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SUBJECT: VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS HELD PREFECT HOSTAGE FOR 3 HOURS

¶1. (U) Poloff spoke over the telephone with the prefect of Forecariah, Mme Marie Guilavogui, on March 26 in order to confirm a March 21 internet report (Aminata.com) regarding a short-lived military mutiny in her prefecture. The prefect said that a group of armed volunteer soldiers held her hostage for about three hours on March 21, but that she was not physically hurt during the ordeal. (NOTE. Forecariah is located about 90 minutes from Conakry, on the border with Sierra Leone. END NOTE.)

¶2. (SBU) According to Guilavogui, 100 of the 900 plus pending military recruitments were reserved for the prefecture of Forecariah. She said that Forecariah is home to a number of &volunteer soldiers,8 men who volunteered to join the military in 2000 when conflict in neighboring Sierra Leone spilled over into Guinea. These soldiers were reportedly promised that they would be officially recruited into the military at the next opportunity. However, Guilavogui said that most of them were not recruited for the 100 spots because they did not qualify according to basic recruitment requirements such as physical fitness and a clean bill of health.

¶3. (SBU) The prefect told Poloff that when the lists were released, a group of volunteer soldiers were angry that they were being passed over, and reacted by creating four different road blocks. Upon hearing of the unrest, Guilavogui went to the scene in order to try and &calm the situation.8 When she got there, she said that the soldiers were in the process of breaking open the weapons armory. They reportedly stole the weapons and then took her hostage.

¶4. (SBU) Guilavogui said that after a few hours, the Ministry of Defense and a military base in nearby Kindia sent two trucks each of soldiers who were able to subdue the mutineers and get the situation back under control. The prefect said that 27 of the volunteer soldiers were arrested and taken to Kindia. In addition, she said that she has successfully &recovered many of the stolen weapons,8 but that some still remain unaccounted for.

COMMENT

¶5. (SBU) The military is considered one of the best employers in Guinea and jobs as soldiers highly desirable. The Ministry of Defense has been making promises to the &volunteer soldiers8 for years and now that they are in the process of recruiting, it is becoming increasingly clear to the volunteers that those promises will not be honored. Defense currently does not officially recognize volunteer soldiers as legitimate servicemembers. END COMMENT.
BROKENSIRE